This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

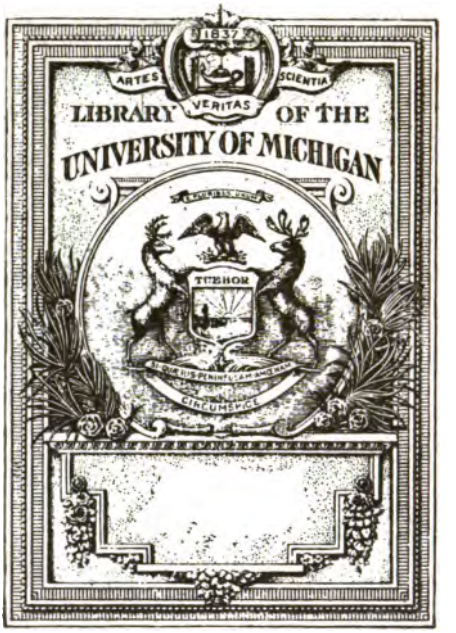
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

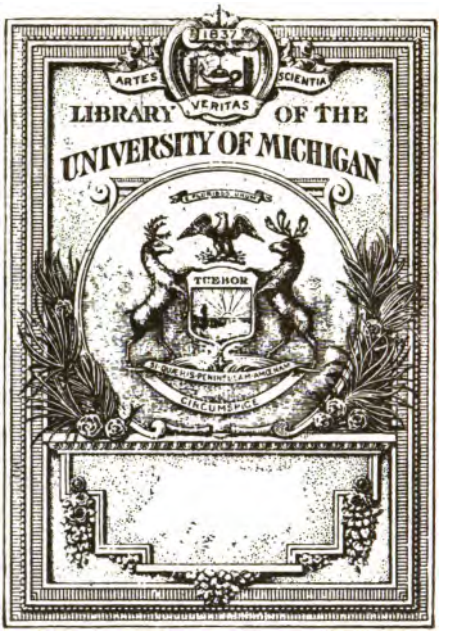
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`



Digitized by Google

822.08
K76c

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

822.08
K76c

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

CAROLINA FOLK-PLAYS

Digitized by Google

THE PLAYMAKERS' AIM

FIRST: *To promote and encourage dramatic art, especially by the production and publishing of plays.*

SECOND: *To serve as an experimental theatre for the development of plays representing the traditions and various phases of present-day life of the people.*

THIRD: *To extend its influences in the establishment of a native theatre in other communities.*

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

A PLAY MAKER OF NORTH CAROLINA

Harold Williamson as JED in his own play, *Peggy*, a tragedy of the tenant farmer.

Digitized by Google

CAROLINA FOLK-PLAYS

Edited
With an Introduction on FOLK-PLAY MAKING
By
FREDERICK H. KOCH
Founder and Director of The Carolina Playmakers

Illustrated from photographs of the original productions of the plays

NEW YORK
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY
1922

Digitized by Google

Wahr
8347
English
2-19-1923
gen
COPYRIGHT, 1922
BY
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

All of these plays have been successfully produced.

No royalty is asked for performing rights when no admission is charged. Otherwise there is a charge of five dollars for each performance by amateurs. Professional actors must make special arrangements.

No performance of these plays may be given without full acknowledgment to The Carolina Playmakers, Inc., and to the publishers. Acknowledgment should be made to read as follows: "From the *Carolina Folk-Plays* edited by FREDERICK H. KOCH, Director. Produced by arrangement with The Carolina Playmakers, Inc., and the publishers."

For permission to produce any of the plays address FREDERICK H. KOCH, Director, The Carolina Playmakers, Inc., Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

The plays in this volume are not printed so as to indicate pronunciation, and can be read or played anywhere, upon the terms given on the back of the title page. While it would be well, if not too much trouble, for the actors to study the hints on pronunciation in the Appendix, still, outside of the Carolinas, the parts can be effectively played by actors speaking more or less in the manner of the country folk in whatever state the play is being presented.

Digitized by Google

O 2-19-23 W.W.

TO
"THE ONLIE BEGETTER"
E. G.

Digitized by Google

418189

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS

PAGE

AIMS OF THE CAROLINA PLAYMAKERS . . ii

FOLK-PLAY MAKING xi
By Frederick H. Koch.

WHEN WITCHES RIDE, a Play of Carolina Folk Superstition 3
By Elizabeth A. Lay.

PEGGY, a Tragedy of the Tenant Farmer . . 29
By Harold Williamson.

"DOD GAST YE BOTH!" a Comedy of Mountain Moonshiners 61
By Hubert Heffner.

OFF NAGS HEAD OR THE BELL BUOY, a Tragedy of the North Carolina Coast . . . 91
By Dougald MacMillan.

THE LAST OF THE LOWRIES 117
By Paul Greene.
A Play of the Croatan Outlaws of Robeson County, North Carolina.

APPENDIX: The Language of the Plays . . 149
By Tom Peete Cross.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

ILLUSTRATIONS

A PLAYMAKER OF NORTH CAROLINA . *Frontispiece*
Harold Williamson in his own play of PEGGY.
From photograph by Wooton-Moulton

PAGE

Program Heading-Picture xi
By Julius J. Lankes

Scene from WHEN WITCHES RIDE . *Facing* 18
From photograph by Wooton-Moulton

Scene from PEGGY . . . . . *Facing* 54
From photograph by Ellington

The last episode in "DOD GAST YE BOTH!" *Facing* 84
From photograph by Wooton-Moulton

The Old Woman in OFF NAGS HEAD or THE BELL BUOY . . . . . *Facing* 96
From photograph by Wooton-Moulton

Scene from LAST OF THE LOWRIES . *Facing* 140
From photograph by Wooton-Moulton

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

FOLK-PLAY MAKING

By Frederick H. Koch

Founder of The Dakota Playmakers and The Carolina Playmakers

The *Carolina Folk-Plays* suggest the beginnings of a new native theatre. They are pioneer plays of North Carolina life. The stories and characters are drawn by the writers from their own tradition, and from their observation of the lives of their own people.

They are wholly native—simple plays of the locality, of common experience and of common interest. North Carolina is rich in legends and in historical incident; she is rich too in the variety and virility of her present-day life. There is in these plays something of the tang of the Carolina soil. There is something of the isolation of her mountains and their sheltering coves; something of the sun and the wind of the farm lands; of the shadowy thickets of Scuffletown Swamp; something, too, of the loneliness of the lives of the fisher-folk on the shifting banks of Nags Head or Cape Lookout.

Digitized by Google

They were written by sons and daughters of Carolina, at Chapel Hill, the seat of the state university. They have been produced with enthusiasm and success by The Carolina Playmakers in their own town and in many towns all over the state. The Carolina Playmakers is a group of amateurs—*amateurs* in the original and full sense of the word—devoted to the establishment of a theatre of coöperative folk-arts. Not a single cloth has been painted by an outsider. Everything has been designed and made in the home town in a truly communal way.

To be sure they are plays of a single section, of a single state, North Carolina. But they have a wider significance. We know that if we speak for the human nature in our own neighborhood we shall be expressing for all. The locality, if it be truly interpreted, is the only universal. It has been so in all lasting literature. And in every locality all over America, as here in North Carolina to-day, there is the need and the striving for a fresh expression of our common folk life.

THE BEGINNINGS IN NORTH DAKOTA

The North Carolina plays represent the cumulation of years of experiment. The beginnings at the University of North Dakota, located at Grand Forks, were simple enough. It is now sixteen years since the writer made the first "barn-storming" tour, in 1906, over the treeless levels of Dakota with a company of University players. The play was Richard Brinsley Sheridan's admirable comedy, *The Rivals,* to be followed in suc-

Digitized by Google

ceeding tours with such old favorites as Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer,* Dickens' *Tom Pinch,* and Sheridan Knowles' *The Love Chase.* In this way the ground was cleared and made ready for a people's drama of sound foundations.

A remarkable development of dramatic interest followed, and an enthusiastic fellowship of players was formed. It grew, and became in good time a flourishing society of play-makers—The Dakota Playmakers—pledged to the production of native plays of their prairie country.

Two different types of drama developed naturally—the pageant, a distinctly communal form enlisting actively all the people; and the folk-play, an intimate portrayal of the life and character of the people of the plains.

DAKOTA COMMUNAL DRAMA

In the Dakota pageantry a new form of creative literary work was evolved—communal authorship. The historical *Pageant of the North-West* in 1914, and the tercentenary masque, *Shakespeare, The Playmaker,* in 1916, were designed and written entirely—dialogue, poetry, and music—by a group of these amateur Playmakers in collaboration, eighteen in the first case and twenty in the second. And the published play-books proved that the people themselves, when rightly directed, could create their own dramatic forms, in phrases "filled with liveliness and humor, and with no little imagination" in a coöperative native drama

Digitized by Google

"never amateurish and sometimes reaching a high literary level." *

Such production required a theatre in the open. There was no hill-slope and, by the necessity of the prairie land, a new type of native theatre was discovered. So the Bankside Theatre came to be "the first open-air theatre to make use of the natural curve of a stream to separate the stage from the amphitheatre,"[1] and a contribution was made of permanent value in the history of the out-door stage.

In succeeding years of this renaissance—for such indeed it proved to be—The Dakota Playmakers carried out over the state their new-found means of dramatic expression, directing the country people in many parts of North Dakota in the writing and staging of pageants and plays of their own local traditions.

DAKOTA FOLK-PLAYS

At the same time The Playmakers at the university were busy writing for their improvised "Play-Stage" a variety of simple folk-plays portraying scenes of ranch and farm life, adventures of the frontier settlers, incidents of the cowboy trails.

Then they toured the state with their new-made Prairie Plays using a simple portable stage of their own devising. And the people in the towns visited received them with wonder and enthusiasm. They knew them for their own, and were honestly proud and happy about it. Everybody said, "Come again, and we'll give

1 "Dakotan Discoveries in Dual Dramaturgy," by Hiram K. Moderwell, in *The Boston Evening Transcript*, September 30, 1916.

Digitized by Google

you a bigger audience next time!" The little folk-play had found its own.

Typical of these prairie plays perhaps is *Barley Beards* by Howard DeLong, who was born of French homesteaders in a sod shanty forty miles from the railroad. *Barley Beards* deals with an I. W. W. riot in a North Dakota threshing crew and is based on young DeLong's experiences on a Dakota wheat farm at harvest time. The author himself designed and painted the scenery, and acted a leading part in his play.

Other one-act pieces of this type are: *Back on the Old Farm* by Arthur Cloetingh, suggesting the futility of the "high-brow" education when it goes back to the country home at Long Prairie; *Dakota Dick,* by Harold Wylie, a comedy of the Bad Lands of the frontier days; and *Me an' Bill,* by Ben Sherman of Judith Basin, Montana, a tragedy of the "loony" sheep-herder, well-known to the playwright, and his love of the lonely shepherd's life on the great plains:

"You are out there on the plains, under the blue sky, with the soft winds a-singin' songs to you. Free—God, but you're free! You get up in the morning to meet the sun; you throw out your arms, breathe into your lungs life; and it makes you live—it makes you live! It is the same feelin' He had. He wanted to live for his sheep. (*Then addressing his spectral dog he chuckles to himself.*) Did you catch him, Shep?"

Full of the poetry of the North-West country are the words of Tim Nolan in the romance of the old Irish pioneer in *For the Colleen* by Agnes O'Connor:

Digitized by Google

"Hers was the face that 'u'd haunt the heart and the dreams of such a lonely Irish lad as Tim Nolan was, on the big prairie. And I began to work my claim as I'd never done before—dreamin' all the time of a little home. Just a wee house with a white picket fence around it—with wild roses growin' everywhere. Just Mary and me, and the green of the grass, and the spring winds blowin' fresh, and the meadow-lark singin'."

Such are the country folk-plays of Dakota—simple plays, sometimes crude, but always near to the good, strong, wind-swept soil. They tell of the long bitter winters in the little sod shanty. But they sing too of the springtime of unflecked sunshine, of the wilderness gay with wild roses, of the fenceless fields welling over with lark song! They are plays of the travail and the achievement of a pioneer people.

THE CAROLINA PLAYMAKERS

The work of The Dakota Playmakers was noted in various parts of the country. In North Carolina, Dr. Edwin Greenlaw, Head of the Department of English in the state university, saw a rich field for the making of a native folk drama. His insight and continuing loyalty have made possible the remarkable growth of the idea there.

North Carolina extends more than five hundred miles from the Great Smoky Mountains on the western border to the treacherous shoals of Hatteras. In the backlands of these mountains and among the dunes of

Digitized by Google

the shifting coast line may be found "neighborhoods" where the customs of the first English settlers still prevail, where folk-tales still survive in words and phrase long since obsolete to us, handed down by word of mouth from one generation to another through all the years of their isolation.

And in North Carolina, too, we have the ballads and the lore of an outlived past side by side with the new life of the present day. Here are still the fine old families of the first Cavaliers and the children of the plantation days of the Old South. In contrast with these is the dreary "one-horse" farm of the poor white tenant and the shiftless negro. In greater contrast, perhaps, is the toil of the thousands of workers at the roaring mills.

North Carolina is still without large cities, and a strong folk-consciousness persists. The State is still regarded by the people as a family of "folks," due to the fact that the population is almost pure Anglo Saxon and still remarkably homogeneous. For all the changing industrial conditions less than two per cent of the inhabitants of the State are of foreign birth or parentage. Here the home talents are still cherished as a means of genuine enjoyment. The people have not broken their connections with the big family of the country folks. They have retained their birthright of pleasure in simple things. It is not strange that from such a spirit of neighborliness a native drama should spring.

A new fellowship of Playmakers came naturally in

Digitized by Google

the fall of 1918. There was no formal organization at first. Membership in The Carolina Playmakers was open to all. Anyone who did anything toward the making of a play was counted a Playmaker. It was truly a society of amateurs in coöperative folk-arts.

Already a wide range of original folk-plays have come. They were written in the University course in Dramatic Composition, and produced by The Playmakers on a home-made stage, constructed by them for the purpose, in the auditorium of the Public School building at Chapel Hill.

The initial program consisted of *What Will Barbara Say?* a romance of Chapel Hill by Minnie Shepherd Sparrow who essayed the leading part; *The Return of Buck Gavin,* a tragedy of a mountain outlaw, by Thomas C. Wolfe, of Ashville, who made his début as a player in the title rôle of this his first play; and *When Witches Ride,* a play of North Carolina folk-superstition drawn largely by the young author, Elizabeth A. Lay, from her own experiences while teaching in a country school in Northampton County.

The prologue, *Our Heritage,* written by Miss Lay for the occasion, expresses beautifully The Playmakers' faith:

> We mock with facts the Southern folk-belief,
> And so forget the eternal quest that strove
> With signs and tales to symbolize the awe
> Of powers in heaven and earth still undefined.
> Yet we may catch the child-like wondering
> Of our old negroes and the country folk,
> And live again in simple times of faith

Digitized by Google

And fear and wonder if we stage their life.
Then witches ride the stormy, thundering sky,
And signs and omens fill believing minds;
Then old traditions live in simple speech
And ours the heritage of wondering!

The production was entirely home-made; the scenery as well as the settings, costumes, and make-up all done in the little home town. Miss Lay tells how she scoured the countryside to find a log cabin to serve as a model for the scene in her initial play, *When Witches Ride,* how she "sketched the details and drew in the logs on the big canvases," and how after "weeks of experiment with the new kind of paint—weeks in which the scene resembled a layer cake or a striped flag more than anything else"—finally the medium was mastered and a really creditable log cabin set achieved.

The first performance of new plays is an event long to be remembered. There is a feeling of intimate interest, an almost childlike excitement on the part of everyone—townspeople, students and professors alike. This is *their play,* written by one of their own number. These are their players, and all are Playmakers together.

It is an interesting experience to participate with the audience in such a performance. "If the log cabin used in a play of fisher-people contains logs larger than the trees in that section," Miss Lay remarked one day, "if the rocks in the fireplace could not have existed, in that locality, if there is a flaw in the dialect, the author

Digitized by Google

and producer will be sure to hear about it." For the audience is genuinely interested in the reality of the play and the stage picture must be true to the life, even in the least details.

The play is *Peggy,* perhaps. The curtain discloses the shabby interior of a tenant cabin. It is a familiar sight—just such a drab-looking cabin in the red fields as each person present has passed by many times without thought or interest. Mag, the jaded farm woman with snuff-stick protruding from the corner of her mouth, is getting supper, singing snatches of an old ballad as she works. She is a commonplace figure. But in the play she becomes a character of new and compelling interest. Spontaneous guffaws of laughter greet this actual appearance upon their stage of the "sorry-looking," snuff-spitting character so familiar to them. But presently all are moved to feel with the actors the tragic fact of her hard-won existence. Then, it seemed to me, that the dividing footlights were gone —that *the audience had actually joined with the actors and become a part of the play itself.* It had become a living truth to them.

The author, Harold Williamson, is playing the part of Jed, the stolid, good-hearted farmhand, with a homely sincerity and naturalness which recalls the work of the Irish Players. Sympathy, simplicity, the abandonment of self in the reality of the scene—these qualities in the acting serve to unite the people in the audience with the players on the stage. It is life itself before them "that moves and feels."

Digitized by Google

The plays produced in these first years have revealed a remarkable variety of materials and forms.

Representative of the farm plays are such tragedies of revolt as *Peggy, The Miser* and *The Lord's Will.* The first of these centres in the character of old Wash Lucas, "the stingiest man living in Harnett County," who hoards his wealth in a steel box and starves the lives of his children. After seeing this piece when it was presented in Raleigh on The Playmakers' State Tour last season, one remarked, "I know every member of that family. It is every bit true!" *The Lord's Will* has the same poignant reality. It tells the story of a country preacher, Lem Adams, the itinerant revivalist of the "tent-meetings," well known in the rural districts of North Carolina. It is the tragedy of a defeated dreamer. In contrast with these are *Dogwood Bushes* and *In Dixon's Kitchen,* comedies of the Carolina springtime, of the dogwoods and the peach trees all in bloom, and the old, old story of a country courtship.

There are plays of daring outlaws, the Croatan gang in *The Last of the Lowries* from the southern part of the State; and mountain plays of moonshiners and adventurers such as *Dod Gast Ye Both!, Reward Offered, The Return of Buck Gavin,* and the ghost-tale of *The Third Night.* There are colorful themes from Colonial times—the strange legend of *The Old Man of Edenton,* the wistful fantasy of *Trista,* the haunting mystery of Theodosia Burr in *Off Nags Head;* plays of the folk-belief in the supernatural as in *The Hag*

Digitized by Google

and in the brave sea-play *Blackbeard, Pirate of the Carolina Coast,* with the gallant song of Bloody Ed, the buccaneer:

In a winding shroud of green seaweed
There many a dead man lies—
And the waves above them glitter at night
With the stare of the dead men's eyes.
No rest, no sleep, ten-fathom deep
They watch with their glittering eyes.

Forever washed by the deep sea-tides
With the changing coral sands,
For their treasured gold in their own deep graves
They search with their bony hands.
No rest, no sleep, ten-fathom deep
They dig with their bony hands.

There are also plays of North Carolina to-day—serious pieces like *Who Pays,* suggested by an incident which occurred during a strike in a southern city, and *The Reaping,* dealing with a social problem based on the Doctor's Report, side by side with the amusing sketches of college life like *The Vamp* and *The Chatham Rabbit* done in the picturesque phrase of our student vernacular; and *Waffles for Breakfast,* a happy satire of newly married life.

Not the least significant are the plays written for a negro theatre, such as the realistic *Granny Boling, The Fighting Corporal,* a rollicking comedy of the undoing of a braggart soldier just back from "de big war in France," and *White Dresses,* the story of Old Aunt Candace and her niece, Mary McLean, a pretty quad-

Digitized by Google

roon girl. Aunt Candace becomes the embodiment of her race, and her words to Mary conclude the stark tragedy of the race problem: "I knows yo'se got feelin's, chile. But yo'se got to smother' em in. Yo'se got to smother 'em in."

In preparing the texts of the plays the aim has been to preserve the naturalness of the speech. The spelling of the dialect has been simplified as much as possible without destroying the distinguishing local characteristics of the language as spoken in North Carolina. The Southern dialect is hard to represent in print. In the task of editing the dialect of the plays The Playmakers are indebted to the expert and devoted services of Professor Tom Peete Cross, formerly of the University of North Carolina, now of the University of Chicago. The results of his scholarly zeal in this difficult field are admirably summarized in his article on "The Language of the Plays" prepared for the appendix to this volume. It will serve as an invaluable guide to the player in the pronunciation of the vernacular as spoken in the South.

A brief statement of the sources of the plays included in this volume will suggest to the reader the nature and the variety of our Carolina materials.

WHEN WITCHES RIDE

The characters and the superstition in this play were drawn largely from the author's observation as a country school teacher in Northampton County, North

Digitized by Google

Carolina. The idea of the plot is based on the following account of the actual character, Phoebe Ward, given in an article by Professor Tom Peete Cross of the University of Chicago on "Folk-Lore from the Southern States," published in *The Journal of American Folk-Lore,* Volume XXII (1909).

"The early years of Phoebe Ward, witch, are shrouded in mystery. . . . She lived here and there, first at one place and then at another in Northampton County, North Carolina. She stayed in a hut or any shelter whatsoever that was granted her.

"She made her living begging from place to place. Most people were afraid to refuse her, lest she should apply her witchcraft to them. . . . Hence the people resorted to a number of methods to keep her away. For instance, when they saw her coming, they would stick pins point-up in the chair bottoms, and then offer her one of these chairs. It is said that she could always tell when the chair was thus fixed, and would never sit in it. Also they would throw red pepper into the fire, and Phoebe would leave as soon as she smelled it burning. . . .

"Among her arts it is said that she could ride persons at night (the same as nightmares), that she could ride horses at night, and that when the mane was tangled in the morning it was because the witch had made stirrups of the plaits. She was said to be able to go through key-holes. . . . She was credited with possessing a sort of grease which she could apply and

Digitized by Google

then slip out of her skin and go out on her night rambles, and on her return get back again."

PEGGY

The characters in this play were drawn from life. "Although far from typical of North Carolina, such conditions as are here portrayed are not uncommon in some localities," the author writes. "The action of the play is a true transcript of the family life of the characters in the play, as I have known them in real life."

"DOD GAST YE BOTH!"

This is a play dealing with moonshiners of western North Carolina. It is a comedy of folk characters lifted out of contemporary life and portrayed through the medium of drama.

A group of mountaineers, lounging around a blockade still which nestled in a thicket of rhododendron and laurel on the side of Grandfather Mountain, one summer day not long ago decided to play a trick on old Noah Setzer, a moonshiner and boss of the Ridge, by telling him that his daughter Mary had "fell" for a certain suspicious stranger who had come into those parts and who was believed to be a "revenooer." Out of this prank and the results that came from it, the plot was developed.

After writing the play, the author took it back to the Hills and read it to Noah one winter evening by his still. To find himself in a play and to hear his very words spoken again quite amazed and delighted the old man. He laughed as he heard again how he had been

Digitized by Google

fooled into getting a "revenooer" for a son-in-law. As he got up to stir his mash, he said, "But hit was a kind o' unnad'ral joke to pull on me atter all!"

Last summer on the occasion of another visit to the scene of his play, Mr. Heffner, the author, found old Sank, the boot-legger for old Noah (whose part he himself played in the original cast) in jail for moonshining.

OFF NAGS HEAD, OR THE BELL BUOY

In the winter of 1812, according to the legend, a pilot boat drifted ashore at Kitty Hawk, near Nags Head, on the coast of North Carolina. In the cabin, among other evidences of the presence on the boat of a woman of wealth and refinement, was found a portrait of a lady. The "bankers," the rough, half barbarous inhabitants of the islands along the North Carolina coast, cut off from the moderating influences of mainland civilization, were in the habit of regarding all driftwood, regardless of its size or condition, as their own property. They fell upon deserted vessels and demolished them. This small pilot boat was treated in the customary manner. The portrait fell into the hands of a fisherman, on whose walls it hung for many years.

In 1869, Dr. William G. Pool was called in to see, near Nags Head, an old fisherwoman, who was sick. He found the portrait, secured possession of it and its story, and later identified the subject as Theodosia Burr, daughter of Aaron Burr.

Digitized by Google

In a small pilot boat, *The Patriot,* on December 30, 1812, Mrs. Theodosia Burr Alston sailed from Georgetown, South Carolina, for New York, where she expected to join her father who had just returned from exile. *The Patriot* did not reach New York; neither it nor any of its crew or passengers was ever heard of again. The commonly accepted story is that the boat was taken by pirates and the persons on board forced to walk the plank.

These are the two stories.

The "bankers" of the North Carolina coast are known, at this time, not to have confined their wrecking activities to the victims that chance threw in their way. They evolved a scheme by which vessels were lured upon the sandy beach by a light fastened to a horse's head, which from a distance looked like a ship at anchor, or moving slowly. When the deluded ship came aground, these land pirates boarded it and, killing the persons on board, plundered the vessel.

These things, told by Miss Pool in *The Eyrie,** and a suggestion made by her furnish the basis for *Off Nags Head.* Miss Pool says, "It is not improbable that *The Patriot* during a night of storm was lured ashore by a decoy light at Nags Head, and that passengers and crew fell into the hands of the land pirates in waiting, who possessed themselves of the boat and everything of value it contained.

* *The Eyrie and Other Southern Stories* by Bettie Freshwater Pool. New York. 1905.

Digitized by Google

THE LAST OF THE LOWRIES

This play is based on the account given by Mrs. Mary C. Norment in *The Lowrie History* (Daily Journal Print, Wilmington, N. C., 1875). Part of the action is not historical. In reality Steve Lowrie and not Henry Berry was the last of the gang.

The Lowries were a famous band of outlaws of mixed blood, part Croatan Indian. In the latter part of the Civil War many of the Croatans in Robeson County were opposed to the conscription of men by the Confederate Government for work on the fortifications along Cape Fear. Among these were the Lowrie boys, who killed an officer sent to arrest them for evading the law. After this, the Lowries concealed themselves in Scuffletown Swamp where they were supplied with food by their sympathizers. As the gang grew in size it began to act on the offensive instead of the defensive, and soon it spread terror throughout the county, robbing, plundering, and killing when necessary. For more than ten years the gang held out against the officers of the law and only in 1874 was the last Lowrie killed.

No particular effort is made to follow the intricacies of the Croatan dialect. But the following characteristics of pronunciation will be of aid in giving the play local color.

The typical Croatan of 1874 spoke with a peculiar drawl in his voice, most often pronouncing his *t* like *d*, as "better," *bedder; c* or *ck* was pronounced like *g*, as "back," *bag;* short *a* like short *o*, as "man," *mon*.

Digitized by Google

Sometimes *g* was sounded as *d*, as "loving," *lovind*. Even now there is little change in the dialect of the uneducated Croatans.

In the woodcut at the beginning of this article, designed by Mr. Julius J. Lankes as a program-heading for The Carolina Playmakers, a mountaineer on one side and a pirate on the other draw the curtains on a Carolina Folk-Play, *The Last of the Lowries*, suggesting the wide range of materials from which these plays are drawn.

Such are the *Carolina Folk-Plays*.

They have been welcomed in towns and cities all over North Carolina. It is the hope of our Playmakers that they will have something of real human interest for the big family of our American folk beyond the borders of Carolina.

There is everywhere an awakening of the folk-consciousness, which should be cherished in a new republic of active literature. As did the Greeks and our far-seeing Eliabethan forebears, so should we, the people of this new Renaissance, find fresh dramatic forms to express our America of to-day—our larger conception of the kingdom of humanity.

Toward this The Carolina Playmakers are hoping to contribute something of lasting value in the making of a new folk theatre and a new folk literature.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina.
September 30, 1922.

Digitized by Google

MAG

(*Imploring*)

You'll marry Jed, won't you, Pegg? You ain't a-goin' to see your ol' ma go to the poorhouse, air you, Pegg?

PEGGY

(*After a moment of silence she raises her head and speaks in broken sobs*)

I reckon . . . it's the only way . . . for me.

CURTAIN

Digitized by Google

OFF NAGS HEAD[1] OR THE BELL BUOY

A Tragedy of the North Carolina Coast

By

Dougald MacMillan

1 Copyright, 1922, by The Carolina Playmakers, Inc. All rights reserved. Permission to produce this play may be secured by addressing Frederick H. Koch, Director, The Carolina Playmakers, Inc., Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE LAST OF THE LOWRIES

Digitized by Google

THE LAST OF THE LOWRIES

CAST OF CHARACTERS

As originally produced at The Play-House, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, April 30 and May 1, 1920.

CUMBA LOWRIE, *the aged mother of the Lowries,* Elizabeth Taylor

JANE, *her daughter,* Ruth Penny

MAYNO, *Cumba's daughter-in-law,* Rachel Freeman

HENRY BERRY LOWRIE, *last of the outlaw gang,* Ernest Nieman

SCENE: The rough home of the Lowrie gang in Scuffletown, a swampy region of Robeson County, North Carolina.

TIME: A night in the winter of the year 1874.

Digitized by Google

SCENE

THE kitchen of the Lowrie home.

The interior is that of a rude dwelling built of rough-hewn timbers. At the right front is a fireplace in which a fire is burning. Pots and pans are hung around the fireplace. A rocking chair is drawn up in front of the fire. At the right rear is a cupboard. At the centre rear a door leads outside. Above it are several fishing poles and a net resting on pegs fitted into the joists. To the rear at the left is a loom with a piece of half-finished cloth in it. A door in the centre of the left wall leads into an adjoining room. To the right of it is a window. At the front on that side is a chest. In the centre of the room is a rough, oblong eating-table and several home-made chairs with cowhide bottoms. A spinning-wheel stands at the front left. On the table is an unlighted candle in a tin holder.

The play opens with MAYNO LOWRIE *spinning at the wheel. She stops, folds her hands aimlessly across her lap, and stares idly into the fire. She is a full-blooded Croatan, about twenty-five years old, of medium height with skin a tan color, almost copper, prominent cheek bones, short flat nose, and black shifty eyes. Her coarse raven hair is wound into a knot at the back of her head. She is dressed in a polka-dot calico. Her shoes are somewhat heavy but comfortable*

Digitized by Google

looking. Around her neck she wears a string of shiny glass beads. Several cheap rings adorn her hands.

For a moment she sits idle, and then begins to spin lazily, at almost every revolution of the wheel stopping to glance at the rear door, then at the door to the left, as if expecting someone to enter. She listens. From afar off comes the lone hoot of an owl. She shakes her head and starts the wheel going again. Then she goes to the fireplace, turns the bread in the spider and with a long-handled spoon stirs the peas in the pot. After this she goes back to her chair at the wheel.

Three knocks are heard at the rear door. MAYNO *hurries to remove the bar.* JANE LOWRIE *enters with a bundle under her arm. She throws the bundle on the table, takes off her bonnet and cape and hangs them on a peg near the door at the left.* MAYNO *goes to the bundle, stares at it half curiously and fearfully.* JANE *comes to the fire without speaking. She is a tall Croatan girl, dressed more plainly than* MAYNO *in a dress of homespun, with no ornaments. Her shoes are covered with mud. She is about twenty years old, with heavy black hair, light tan-colored skin, and regular features. Her face is more open and intelligent than* MAYNO'S. *Her whole figure expresses weariness. She looks anxoiusly at the door of the adjoining room, then turns to* MAYNO.

JANE

Has she asked for me?

MAYNO

Not but once. I tol' her you'd stepped over to

Digitized by Google

Pate's for a little flour, and she seemed to pearten up at that. Said mebbe they'd be a letter from the boys 'way yander.

(She smiles scornfully. Still standing at the table, she looks at the package. CUMBA'S *voice is heard calling from the room at the left.)*

CUMBA

Jane, Jane, is that ye?

JANE

(Going to the door at the left)

Yes, muh, I'm jes' back from Pate's with the flour.

CUMBA

All right, honey.

*(*JANE *goes into the room. Their voices can be heard indistinctly.* MAYNO *looks at the package, reaches and touches it. Then she tears a hole in the paper, peers at it intently and draws away.* JANE *comes back.)*

JANE

Mayno, they're . . . his'n!

MAYNO

Whose? . . . Yes, they must be his'n.

JANE

(Lighting a candle and placing it on the table)

Yes, Mayno, they's Steve's all right.

Digitized by Google

MAYNO

How'd you git 'em, chile?

JANE

I got 'em from the sheriff.

MAYNO

And I thought you were goin' to see Henry Berry 'bout Steve's money and find where they put 'im.

(She opens the package and takes out a coat, a pair of trousers, and a black felt hat. The garments are slashed and stiff with blood.)

JANE

I did—two hours proguing down through the black swamps an' the bramble br'ars, and when I foun' Henry Berry he said them sher'ffs what killed Steve got his money, and as for where they put 'im, nobody knows. (CUMBA *is heard groaning as she turns in her bed.* JANE *lowers her voice.*) And then I went to the sheriff for his clothes. I knowed that some day when she—(*Nodding to the room at the left*)—finds it out she'll be wantin' his clothes, them she made with her own hands like th' others. And the sheriff wouldn't tell me where they buried 'im.

MAYNO

Took his money, did they? That's the way with them white folks. They do all they kin agin' us poor Croatons, 'cause we's jes' injuns, they says—though we knows better.

Digitized by Google

JANE

They don't hold nothin' agin' us; hit's agin' the boys.

MAYNO

They killed yo' daddy and William and Tom and Steve for being robbers and cut-throats and they robbers and cut-throats theyselves. (*Fiercely.*) And me needing new dresses and the like. But they's one left they won't git, the last an' best of 'em all. The day they lays Henry Berry cold they'll be more of 'em got than has been.

JANE

(*Wearily*)

Hush, Mayno; with your jawing you'd wake the dead. She'll hear you.

MAYNO

(*Throwing down the clothes and coming to the fire*)

Well, why you want to keep pushing trouble from her? What's the good o' it? She'll find it out somehow. She's suffered now 'til you cain't hurt her no more. And ain't I suffered too, with my man dead on me? What call has she got to . . .

JANE

No, we ain't a-goin' to tell her now. She ain't got much longer, and let her keep on b'lieving Steve and Henry Berry's safe in Georgy. No, they ain't no use o' letting her on to it now.

(JANE *sits at the spinning-wheel.*)

Digitized by Google

MAYNO
(*Vehemently*)

Ain't Henry Berry going to *try* to git them sher'ffs back for killing Steve? If I's a outlaw like him I'd a done paid 'em. And he'll pay 'em, too! He's the best o' the Lowries and he'll 'venge them that's been murdered in cold blood like Steve and the rest.

JANE

No, Mayno, he won't nuther. His time's drawin' nigh. He knows it. They're settin' for him everywhere. They's men watchin' this house to-night. I seen it in his face to-day that he's layin' down. He was wrong from the first. He knows it now.

MAYNO

What's that!

JANE

Yes, he's a-quittin', but if them sheriffs hadn't agged him on ten years ago when he wanted to quit and be quiet he'd a been livin' in peace here to-night. But it's too late now. Too many men's been killed. And he's putting up his guns at the last. They'll git him 'fore many days. . . . He tol' me so.

MAYNO

You're a-lyin', gal. You know he's goin' to scorch 'em with his spite and bring 'em down for Steve, him as was the strappingest man o' the gang. It ain't his way to be a-backing down and not pay 'em.

Digitized by Google

JANE

No, he ain't. He's a-puttin' it by, I tell you. They'll ketch him 'fore long.

MAYNO

Then what you goin' to do 'bout her in there? You cain't keep on a-foolin' her forever with your letters and money and mess from Georgy.

JANE

Well, we c'n fool 'er till she gits better, cain't we? And if she don't git better, then she'll go out happier, won't she . . . believin' Steve and Henry Berry's safe and livin' as they ought—(*She rises and goes to the cupboard*)—she so old and fearful at the door hinge skreaking and the red rooster crowing a-'fore the glim o' dawn, you know, Mayno.

(*She brings some butter and the molasses pot from the cupboard, takes the spider from the fire and puts supper on the table.*)

MAYNO

Well, go on if you will, but you cain't keep it up much longer. It'll be jes' like I said. Henry Berry'll come broozin' around some night. Sposen so?

JANE

(*Frightened*)

You reckon he'd do that. . . . No he couldn't. I tol' him about how it was with her, and besides he knows the house is watched.

Digitized by Google

MAYNO

(*Shaking her head*)

I dunno. He mought. You know the time he slipped through a whole passel o' them sher'ffs jes' to come here and git a shirt she'd made 'im? And by this time he must be a-wantin' to see her powerful bad.

JANE

(*Terrified*)

You reckon he will? No, he won't! He couldn't do that. (*Old* CUMBA *is heard calling* JANE.) Put them things in the sack with th' others, Mayno, and put 'em in the bottom, too. You c'n be fixin' her supper while I ten' to 'er. (*She goes into the rear room.* MAYNO *takes up the clothes, opens the chest at the left, pulls out a bulky burlap sack and crams the trousers, shirt and hat into it. Shutting the chest, she goes to the cupboard, takes out three plates and some knives and forks and lays them on the table. Then she begins preparing* CUMBA'S *supper on a plate.* JANE *comes to the door and speaks.*) You needn't bring her supper in here, Mayno, she's going to git up, she says. (JANE *goes back into the room.* MAYNO *shrugs her shoulders, sits down and begins to eat.* JANE *comes in supporting old* CUMBA. *She speaks to* MAYNO.) Fix her chair by the fire, Mayno.

MAYNO

(*Rising reluctantly from the table*)

Gimme time, cain't you?

(*She pulls* CUMBA'S *chair nearer to the fire.*

Digitized by Google

CUMBA *is a bent, emaciated old woman, about seventy years of age. Her face is scarred with suffering. She is a mixture of Negro and Portugese, somewhat darker than* JANE. *She is very feeble and shakes with palsy.*)

CUMBA

(*Pausing, as* JANE *leads her to the fire*)

Did you say they warn't nary letter from the boys 'way out thar?

JANE

(*Looking at* MAYNO *as she settles* CUMBA *in her chair*)

No'm, there warn't no letter this time, but they'll be one soon. You see they cain't write often, not yit. They mought be ketched on account of it. 'Tain't quite time for another'n yit.

CUMBA

Mebbe so, mebbe so. But I thought they mought 'a been one. How long is it they been out thar, chile?

JANE

(*Placing the plate of food on her lap*)

Two months now, muh. And they's livin' straight and 'spectable, too. And 'twon't be long 'fore the big Governor'll pardon 'em, and they'll come back to you, and you'll be happy agin.

Digitized by Google

CUMBA

(*Brightening*)

And I'll be at the loom then, a-weavin' 'em the good shirts, won't I? And they'll be working in the fields and comin' home to a good dinner, won't they? And at night Henry Berry'll be a-playin' of his banjo like old times, won't he? (*She stops suddenly. All the brightness goes out of her face. She lets her knife fall to her plate.*) But they won't be but two of 'em, will there, Janie? Jes' two. When thar was Allen, my old man—they shot 'im over thar in the corner. (*She turns and points.*) They's a blood spot thar now. Then thar was Willie and Tom. And they ain't no tellin' how they put 'im away, chile . . . chile . . .

JANE

Now, muh, you mustn't do that!—Eat your supper. You got to git well, time Steve and Henry Berry gits back. They's allus grief with the children going, but you still got two of the boys and me.

(JANE *butters a piece of bread and hands it to her.*)

CUMBA

Mebbe so, mebbe so, chile. But . . . (*She stops.*) Whar's that letter that come from the boys last month? I wants it read agin.

JANE

But, muh, you got to eat. I'll read it after while. Let me fry you a egg.

(MAYNO *leaves the table and begins spinning at the wheel.*)

Digitized by Google

CUMBA

I ain't hongry, chile. Take them thar rations and put 'em back and read me the letter. It's enough to hear it . . . hearin' that the last of my boys is safe and ca'm and livin' once more as I'd lak 'em to.

JANE

Well, I'll git it then.

(*She goes, searches in the cupboard, and at last draws out a greasy envelope. From this she takes a sheet of paper and comes back to old* CUMBA.)

CUMBA

Read it, honey. It's the blessin' of the Lord that I's spared to learn that two o' my boys is shet of sin. But they's been a heap o' blood spilt, chile, a heap o' blood spilt . . . but they's been more tears spilt by they ol' mammy, too, and mebbe at last they'll ketch a chance to come back to her. Read it, chile.

JANE

(*Glancing at* MAYNO *and then looking at the letter*)

They says they's a-gitting along well and makin' money an' . . .

CUMBA

Don't read it like that. Read what they says!

JANE

Well, I'll read it then.

(*She pretends to read.*)

Digitized by Google

"Dear Mammy:

"We writes to let you know we're in Georgy at last, safe an' sound. We're both workin' in a store an' makin' good money. They ain't nobody knows what we done back there, an' the people is good to us. 'Twon't be long 'fore the Governor'll pardon us, and we can come back and take care o' you.

"Your loving sons,

"Steve and Henry Berry."

CUMBA

You left out somethin', child. Don't you know they sent some money with the letter and they spoke about it.

JANE

(*Confused*)

Yes'm, that's right. I forgot it. It's on the other side, mammy. Yes'm, here it is. It says, "We're sendin' you twenty dollars to buy meat and flour with."

CUMBA

Good boys they is, they ain't never meant no harm. Willie and Tom was jes' that-a-way. Every cent they used to make a-hoein' cotton 'roun' they'd give it to they ol' mammy, an' the good Lord knows whar they's sleepin' to-night . . . but they's two spared me an' I hadn't ought to complain, I reckon. Is the money all gone, Janie?

JANE

No'm, there's some left yit, and they'll be sending more in the next letter.

Digitized by Google

(She puts the letter back into the cupboard and begins cleaning up the dishes. Old CUMBA *leans back in her chair, gazing into the fire. The hooting of an owl is heard. She stirs uneasily in her chair.* MAYNO *and* JANE *stop their work and listen. They both look at each other and then glance at old* CUMBA, *who is trembling and gripping the arms of her chair.* JANE *begins to rattle the dishes.* MAYNO *spins rapidly.)*

CUMBA

(Turning to JANE)

Ain't that a owl squeechin', Jane?

JANE

(Looking at MAYNO)

What? . . . I . . . I don't hear nothin'.

(The hooting is heard again.)

CUMBA

Ain't that it agin?

MAYNO

Aw, it's nothin' but that ol' swamp owl. He hollers 'most every night. Don't take on 'bout it.

(She shivers and stirs the fire.)

CUMBA

(Shrilly)

It sounds like some o' my boys a-makin' o' they signals down thar in the night; but 'tain't them though.

Digitized by Google

The only two that's left is a long ways off, and mebbe won't never come back.

JANE

Now, they will too.

CUMBA

'Way back yonder I loved to see 'em 'round me here, the warm fire a-burnin' and Allen thar a-working at his gear, and them that was little uns then a-playing on the floor. I didn't mind it them times. (*Her voice grows shriller.*) And now where are they? My ol' man and all the house gone from me.

MAYNO

Aw, Ma Lowrie, what's the use of all them carrying-ons? You reckon you're the only one that's had trouble in this world?

CUMBA

And when the rain and the wind come raring down and the cypress trees is moanin' in the dark and the owls a-honing through the night, I think on them three lyin' dead thar in the woods and the water washin' over them, and me with nothin' but their clothes to remember on and show for them I was prided for.

(*Again the hooting of the owl is heard.* JANE *leaves the dishes suddenly and comes to the fire, lays more wood on, furtively wiping the tears from her eyes.* CUMBA *still looks in the fire.*)

JANE

It's time for you to lay down now.

Digitized by Google

CUMBA

(*Without noticing her*)

At times in the dark night I dream on 'em and they ain't nothin' happened and it's all like it used to be, and then I wake a-callin', and they don't answer, for they're sleepin' out naked in the cold.

MAYNO

(*Shrugging her shoulders*)

Jes' listen at her!—Ma Lowrie, cain't you be quiet a bit? (*Lowering her voice.*) Lord, you're as techous as an old hen!

JANE

(*Half sobbing*)

What makes you carry on like that? It cain't do no good. Ain't Henry Berry tol' you a hundred times that he's buried all three of 'em down thar in the swamp. And he's skeered to tell the place for fear them sher'ffs'll dig 'em up and git the money for 'em. Don't take on so. They's put away with praying like any Christians ought to be, and you'd better lie down now.

(*She looks at* MAYNO.)

CUMBA

Yes, they mought be buried in the swamp down thar, and when it rains the river rises and washes over 'em, them that used to pull at my dress when I was at the wash— But Old Master sends the sun and the rain, and the Book says we ought to be satisfied. (*The owl's*

Digitized by Google

hoot is heard again. CUMBA *looks at the door and shivers.*) Help me in now, chile. I didn't mean to say all that, but I'm done. An' ol' woman's heart is a foolish thing . . . a foolish thing. . . .

(JANE *helps her into the room at the left. A moment later she reappears. She looks at* MAYNO *inquisitively.*)

MAYNO

Sounded like Henry Berry's hootin', didn't it?

JANE

Yes, I'm afraid it's him, after all I tol' him. Oh, what makes him do it? But it's like I said. He's givin' in now, he's quittin' at the last. And he's set on seein' her once more or it's some of his quair notions, somethin' he's wrapped up in gittin'.

(*Three knocks are heard at the door.* JANE *runs and lifts the heavy bar, and* HENRY BERRY LOWRIE *walks in.*)

MAYNO

Henry Berry!

(*He starts to speak but* JANE *lays her finger on her lips and leads him towards the fire. He takes off his hat and bows wearily to* MAYNO.

He is a man of handsome personal appearance. The color of his skin is a mixed white and yellowish brown, almost copper-colored. Just below his left eye is a crescent-shaped scar. Despite the look of weariness, his countenance is

Digitized by Google

expressive in a high degree of firmness and courage. His forehead is broad and high, his eyes large and keen, his hair thick and inclined to curl. He wears a black beard. From appearances he is about twenty-six years of age, a little above medium height, well-knit, broad-shouldered, and well-proportioned throughout. He wears a broad, black felt hat, brown corduroy coat, dark woolen trousers, and calf-skin boots. In a belt around his waist he carries two pistols. From this belt a strap passes upward and supports behind a repeating rifle. He also carries a long-bladed knife stuck in his belt. He takes a seat at the fire, putting his rifle in the corner, but retaining his other arms. JANE *runs to the door at the rear and makes sure that it is closed tight. Then she hurries to* HENRY BERRY.

JANE

Brother, what made you do it! The house is watched an' . . .

HENRY BERRY

I know it, Sis, but I had to come. I'm quittin' . . . to-night. Is she asleep?

(*He jerks his head towards the room at the left.*)

JANE

No, I've jes' helped her in. That's the reason we couldn't make no sign with the light.

Digitized by Google

HENRY BERRY

I couldn't figure what the trouble was. I hooted 'til my head hurt. But I was goin' to risk it anyhow.

JANE

What'll she think if she sees you! Oh, hurry and go away!

HENRY BERRY

Naw, I got to see her. After to-night 'twon't matter. Bring me a bite to eat, Sis. How is she?

MAYNO

I reckon she's on the mend. . . .

JANE

(*Frightened*)

Will they git you to-night? What do you mean by sich talk?

HENRY BERRY

Never mind. They'll git me . . . when I'm dead, all right, no doubt o' that. I'm taking the gear off at last. The ol' man's gone, Willie and Tom's gone, and they got Steve last week, and I'm the last o' the gang. I'm tired, damned tired of it all, Sis.

JANE

But I tell you, you cain't give up like that. You got to keep on fightin' till you git a chance to git away!

HENRY BERRY

Naw, it's too late now. If they'd 'a let me, I'd 'a

Digitized by Google

lived straight, but after the first trouble I had to keep killin' to live. Well, I'm done killin', now . . . 'cept one man, and they ain't no use of you knowin' who it is. You'll know soon enough. One man can't stand it allus, and they'll scrush him at the last.

(JANE *sits at her chair weeping softly.* HENRY BERRY *lays his hand gently on her head. Trying to appear cheerful, he turns to* MAYNO.)

Mayno, bring me a bite to eat.

(*He sits at the table, facing the front.* MAYNO *gets a plate of food and puts it before him. He eats hungrily.*)

MAYNO

Whar'd they put 'im, Henry Berry?

HENRY BERRY

I ain't been able to find out, Mayno. Piled him in some of their rotten graveyards, I reckon, when he loved to run the woods with th' other wild things like him.

MAYNO

What'd they do with his money?

HENRY BERRY

I dunno. Got that, too, I reckon. But you needn't to worry. Jane! (JANE *looks up.*) Here, I've fixed for you-all. Here's money enough to last you three after I'm gone.

(*He stops eating and pulls a bag of money out of his pocket.*)

Digitized by Google

JANE

But, brother . . .

HENRY BERRY

Never mind, take it and take care o' her. It's the last thing I c'n do for her and you.

JANE

But she won't use it, knowin' how you come by it.

HENRY BERRY

She won't?

JANE

No, she won't. She'll starve first, and you know it. You know all them fixin's you sent her. She give 'em all away, the stove and the stool with three legs and everything. And when she thought you and Steve was livin' straight in Georgy, she give away that gold chain you brung her. She's feared you hadn't got it honest.

HENRY BERRY

(*Softly*)

Yes, yes, she's allus been too good fer us. (*He leaves the table and takes a seat near the fire.*) Still that chain was bought honest. . . . But you three's got to live, ain't ye? Take that money, and don't tell 'er. (JANE *puts the money in the chest.*) Mayno, is my ol' banjo still here?

MAYNO

Yeah, in thar.

Digitized by Google

HENRY BERRY

I been wantin' to knock her a little for a long time. And I want to knock her a little the las' night.

JANE

The las' night! It ain't the las' night! If you'd go now you'd git away. Why do you talk like that?

(*She is interrupted by a loud cry. Old* CUMBA *stands in the door at the rear.*)

CUMBA

It's you, it's you, Henry Berry! Come back from Georgy. I knowed you'd come. I knowed. . . . (*She totters to* HENRY BERRY *and throws her arms around him. He kisses her on the forehead. Her look is one of unmingled joy. Suddenly the hurt look comes back into her face.*) Why you come back a-wearin' of your guns?

HENRY BERRY

(*Helping her to the fire*)

I'm just wearin' 'em. I didn't want to be ketched empty. I'm leavin' in a few minutes and le's us enjoy ourselves, and forgit about Georgy.

CUMBA

No, they's somethin' wrong. Whar's Steve?

HENRY BERRY

(*Looking at* MAYNO *and* JANE)

He's waitin' for me . . . out thar.

(*He points toward the swamp.*)

Digitized by Google

CUMBA

Why didn't he come in wid you? Is he well and strong? How I'd love to see 'im!

HENRY BERRY

One of us had to wait for th' othern't, and he's all right. How you feelin', mammy? Is your haid better now?

CUMBA

Yes, I'm gittin' better now. I wants to git well time you and Steve comes home for good. (*Stroking his hand.*) Has the Gov'nor pardoned ye already?

HENRY BERRY

No, mammy, not jest yit. But it'll be all right soon. . . . Steve and me's jest passin' through. . . . Now le's us enjoy ourselves. I got to be movin' in a minute. Steve's waiting for me. . . . Mebbe we'll talk about Georgy some other time. . . . Mayno, bring me my ol' music box.

CUMBA

Yes, yes, git it and let 'im play for me.

(MAYNO *brings the banjo from the next room.* HENRY BERRY *tunes it.* CUMBA *sits gazing in the fire, a troubled look on her face.*)

HENRY BERRY

You want me to play 'bout Job's Coffin hanging in the sky? (*Strangely.*) That was Steve's piece.

Digitized by Google

JANE

(*Nervously*)

Don't, don't play that. It's too lonesome.

(*She shivers.*)

HENRY BERRY

What piece you want me to play?

(*To* CUMBA. *She makes no reply.* HENRY BERRY *looks at her. He strums several bars, his face gradually losing its tense expression.*)

What you want me to play, muh?

CUMBA

Play anything. Some o' the ol' pieces.

HENRY BERRY

I'll play that piece 'bout poor John Hardy.

(*He plays and sings three stanzas of the ballad "John Hardy."*)

Digitized by Google

He's been to the east and he's been to the west
And he's been this wide world round,
He's been to the river an' been baptized,
An' he's been on his hanging ground, poor boy.

John Hardy's father was standing by,
Saying, "Johnnie, what have you done?"
He murdered a man in the same ol' town,
You ought a-seed him a-using of his guns, poor boy.

(*He stops and gazes pensively before him.*)

CUMBA

(*Looking anxiously at* HENRY BERRY)

What's the matter, son? You don't play it like you used to.

Digitized by Google

Scene from *The Last of the Lowries*, a play of the Robeson County Outlaws, by Paul Greene. MAYNO, Henry Berry's sister-in-law (Rachel Freeman); HENRY BERRY LOWRIE (Ernest Neiman); CUMBA, his mother (Elizabeth Taylor); JANE, his sister (Ruth Penny).

CUMBA: What's the matter, son? You don't play it like you used to.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

HENRY BERRY

It ain't nothing. I'll play yo' other piece now, that Florelly song.

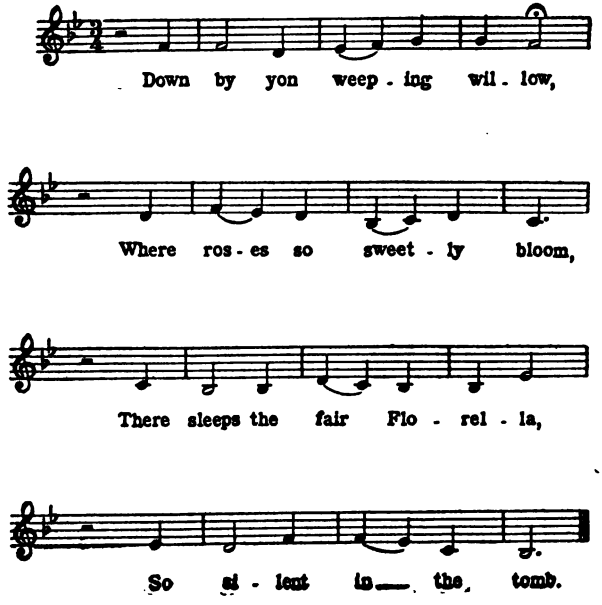
CUMBA

Yes, play it. Allen allus said 'twas a good piece.

HENRY BERRY

The Fair Florella

An Old Ballad



Digitized by Google

She died not broken hearted,
No sickness her befell,
But in one moment parted
From all she loved so well.

Down on her knees before him,
She begged 'im for her life,
But deep into her bosom
He plunged the fatal knife.

(*Before the last verse ends, owl hoots are heard outside.* HENRY BERRY *stops, listening. The banjo slips through his hands to the floor. All three look at him questioningly.*)

CUMBA

What is it, boy? Don't look that-a-way.

(*Again the hooting of an owl is heard.* HENRY BERRY *rises to his feet, takes his rifle from the chimney corner and stands an instant tensely silent. Slowly his defensive attitude changes to one of despair. They watch him anxiously as he comes back to his former place in the room, looks down at his banjo, makes a move as if to pick it up, then turns to* CUMBA.)

HENRY BERRY

Well, I'm goin'. I've sorto' tried to be a fitten boy to you, but I reckon I made poor outs at it.

(*He bends and kisses her. She rises and clings to him.*)

Digitized by Google

CUMBA

You ain't a-goin' air ye? It'll be for the las' time and I know it.

HENRY BERRY

Yes'm, I got to go. Didn't you hear Steve's signal? He's a-waitin'.

(*Making an indefinite motion with his hand toward the swamp, he loosens her hold, kisses* JANE *and makes a sign for* MAYNO *to follow him. They both go out.* CUMBA *wrings her hands and follows him toward the door. Then she becomes calm.*)

Let him go off now, an' I'll never see 'im agin. His sperit's broke and he won't be a-goin' back to Georgy. I see it in his face that he's quittin' it all.

JANE

No'm he ain't, he's a-goin' straight back. . . . He and Steve is.

CUMBA

No, he ain't a-goin' back. Cain't I see what's in his face? They'll git 'im and 'twon't be long, and then Steve'll be shot down next, and there'll be only a handful o' their clothes for me to look at. (JANE *weeps silently.*) Whar's Mayno?

JANE

She's jes' stepped out a minute. She'll be back.

Digitized by Google

CUMBA

Yes, and I know, they're goin' to git 'im. They's a-setting for him thar in the black night.

JANE

No'm, they ain't, I tell you. They'll never git Henry Berry. (OLD CUMBA *shakes her head mumbling. She goes to the chest at the left and takes out the burlap bag. The lid of the chest falls.* JANE *starts up.*) Put it back, put it back. You mustn't look at 'em to-night. Come back to the fire.

(*She tries to take the bag from her.*)

CUMBA

No, chil', I ain't. I'm goin' to look at all that's left of 'em.

JANE

Let 'em be!

CUMBA

(*Waving her off*)

No, git away. Soon Henry Berry's 'll be in there, too. (*She stops and looks at the bag.*) Janie, who's been foolin' wi' this? What's . . .

(*She hurries to the table and holding the sack close to the candle, opens it. She catches hold of a coat sleeve and draws out Steve's coat. A gasping dry sound comes from her throat. She drops the bag and holds the coat in her trembling hands.*)

It's Steve's! How came it here? It's Steve's!—one I made 'im myself.

Digitized by Google

JANE

Oh, muh, let . . . What ails you?

CUMBA

I s'picioned it! And they been foolin' me.

JANE

(*Hopelessly*)

Yes'm, it's Steve's.

(CUMBA *sways to and fro.*)

CUMBA

You been foolin' me! You been foolin' me! (*She stands rigid for a moment, then speaks in a hard, lifeless voice.*) It warn't right to fool me like that. . . . When'd it happen?

JANE

Las' week. . . . They got 'im down on the big road by the swamp, an' . . .

CUMBA

Hush! Don't tell me 'bout it. I'm afflicted and defeated enough now. They's only one left and they'll git 'im soon. . . . Did they put Steve away like a man?

JANE

I dunno. The sheriff give 'is clothes to me.

(*A shot is heard in the distance, followed by a woman's scream.*)

Digitized by Google

CUMBA

(*Starting up and speaking in a shrill voice*)

They got 'im now! They got 'im now! The last un's gone!

(*She tries to go out at the door.* JANE *stops her.*)

JANE

(*Catching her by the arm*)

Don't do that!

(CUMBA *goes back to the sack, picks up* STEVE'S *coat and stares at it dully.*)

CUMBA

They tuck 'em all now. They tuck 'em all.

JANE

Muh, it had to come. An' it's better that-a-way.

CUMBA

(*Lifelessly*)

Better that-a-way?

JANE

Yes, it's better like that. They was wrong from the jump.

CUMBA

Wrong! My boys was good boys. They ain't never . . . (*Raising her hands above her head, she speaks fiercely.*) May Ol' Master send his fires on them that done it! An' . . .

Digitized by Google

JANE

(*Sobbing*)

Oh, why'd they do it!

CUMBA

No. It says as how we'd ought to love 'em 'at does us wrong.

(*She closes her eyes, swaying slightly from side to side.*)

JANE

Let me help you to lie down now!

CUMBA

Yes, it's better that-a-way, I reckon. (*Her face shows resignation to sorrow. She speaks with a sort of joy in her voice.*) An' I won't be livin' in hope and fear no mo', will I? (*Slowly.*) And when the owls hoot through the swamp at night, and the whippoor-wills sing in the thicket at dark, I won't have cause to think that's one o' my own a-givin' of 'is signals, an' tryin' to slip back to 'is ol' home, the only place he loves, —will I? (*She drops down into the chair behind the table.*) An' I won't lie awake at night, thinkin' they're in danger . . . for He's done give 'em His peace at last.

(MAYNO *enters running. Old* CUMBA *stands up.*)

MAYNO

He shot 'isself. He shot 'isself! He give me this coat to give to you, an' then the sheriffs crope from the

Digitized by Google

thicket at 'im, but he shot 'isself 'fore they got to 'im, and they tuck 'im and toted 'im off!

(She drops into her chair exhausted, rocking to and fro. Old CUMBA *takes the coat from her, looks at it, and then puts it in the sack. She puts* STEVE'S *coat in also and stands looking down at the bag.)*

CUMBA

Thar's all that's left o' them I loved . . . a bundle o' clothes to show for my man an' four grown sons. *(She stops an instant.)* You'll all sleep quiet at last. *(She stands a moment silent, then shrilly.)* But they're all gone, and what call hev I got to be living more. . . .

(She raises her hand as if in a curse. But her face softens, and as the curtain falls, she stands with both hands outstretched on the clothes, blessing them.[1]

1 It is interesting to note that the actual story (see Introduction page xxviii) of the old Lowrie mother somewhat parallels that of Maurya in Synge's *Riders to the Sea.* In the one case the mother sees her sons sacrificed before the power of the law. In the other she sees them claimed by the terribleness of the sea. So far as the suffering is concerned, the forces in both cases might be the same.

Digitized by Google

APPENDIX

THE LANGUAGE OF THE PLAYS

Observations on the Pronunciation of the Dialects of North Carolina

With a few obvious exceptions, the personages depicted in the dramas here printed speak one or another of the dialects used by the uncultured whites and negroes of North Carolina. In connection with this effort to utilize for dramatic purposes the folk speech of a relatively small district of the South, several facts should be borne in mind. In the first place, it is an error to assume, as appears to be done frequently outside the South, that all Southern whites speak practically alike and that the difference between their speech and that of Southern negroes is insignificant. Although, it is true, certain peculiarities of pronunciation and certain turns of phrase are more or less common to all speakers of English in the South Atlantic States, considerable differences both in vocabulary and in pronunciation are discernible between numerous districts of this section, in some instances even when these districts adjoin each other. The dialect spoken by the native whites of eastern North Carolina, for example, is markedly different from that of the Carolina highlands, and among the Blue Ridge and Alleghany

Digitized by Google

mountains clear variations in language may sometimes be noted as one passes from valley to valley or from "cove" to "cove." Again, although it is true that the English-speaking negroes of the South, having borrowed their language from the whites, have much in common with them and have even exerted an appreciable influence upon the speech of their white neighbors, yet no Southerner would confuse the dialect of a typical uneducated Carolina negro with that of even the most backward Carolina white. Moreover, in North Carolina, as elsewhere, dialect varies from family to family and from individual to individual, and even the same person changes his speech to suit his humor, his company, or other occasional circumstances. What Horace Kephart says of the Carolina mountaineer is true of the uncultured throughout the State. "The same man," writes the author of *Our Southern Highlanders,* "at different times may say *can't* and *cain't, set* and *sot, jest* and *jes'* and *jist, atter* and *arter, seed* and *seen, here* and *hyur* and *hyar, heerd* and *heern* and *heard, took* and *tuk.*" These facts, obvious as they are to the Southerner, need to be emphasized if this volume is to be read intelligently outside the South.

It should also be observed that the dialects of North Carolina, like those of other districts, cannot be correctly represented by any conventional system of printed signs. As Professor Sheldon has pointed out, "the written [language] . . . is, speaking, generally, only a later and inexact representation for the eye of the language as spoken, that is, of the real language," and, with an alphabet so imperfect as ours, it is clearly

Digitized by Google

impossible to depict accurately even the more obvious peculiarities of Southern pronunciation, to say nothing of the subtler differences between the various speech-islands of the South. Few of the differences between North Carolinese and standard American English are capable of exact representation by ordinary letters; most of them are so elusive as to escape even the most elaborate system of phonetic symbols. In the words of a distinguished authority on the history of English speech, "You could not denote [such variations in language] if you would and if you could, you would be encumbered, rather than aided, by the multiplicity of signs." Or, to adopt the language of a queer old eighteenth century spelling reformer, "delicate ears alone can discern what only delicate organs can convey."

In view of these difficulties, it became necessary to adopt an arbitrary standard of spelling for the dialects represented in this volume. In establishing this norm the editors have been guided by several considerations. To begin with, as may be observed in the work of Synge and other serious writers of dialect literature, successful dialect writing depends rather upon picturesqueness of vocabulary and idiom than upon spelling. In the best dialect literature spelling is of purely incidental value. Again, in the case of many words and phrases the difference between North Carolinese and American English as spoken by all except the most careful speakers outside the South, is too slight to justify any change in the accepted spelling. On the other hand, the combined labors of Southern dialect writers for nearly a century have established for certain words and

Digitized by Google

phrases a conventional standard which has come to be associated in the public mind with any effort to represent on paper the speech of the typical Southerner. In considering the matter of traditional dialect spelling, a distinction should, however, be made between legitimate variations from standard practice and those spellings which are of no assistance in pronunciation and are merely "bad." Josh Billings, it is recorded, began his career as a humorist by changing his famous "Essa on the Muel" from ordinary to "phonetic" spelling, but most of Josh Billings' spellings, however funny they may have been to our fathers, have little justification phonetically. The same is true of much of the spelling used by Artemus Ward, Petroleum V. Nasby, Sut Lovingood, and other humorous writers who have helped to establish the tradition of dialect spelling in America. For many words contained in the dramas here printed, new spellings could be devised which, regarded phonetically, would perhaps represent the actual Carolina pronunciation more accurately than either the standard or the traditional orthography; yet any such gain in accuracy would in most cases be more than offset by a resulting loss in intelligibility. In view of these facts and of the alarm with which spelling reforms are liable to be regarded by the average reader, it has been deemed advisable to depart from standard usage only in those cases where traditional practice in Southern dialect literature clearly points the way or where the use of "phonetic" spelling runs no risk of irritating or distracting the reader.

Although nothing short of an intimate acquaintance

Digitized by Google

with spoken North Carolinese can insure an absolutely correct pronunciation of the written language, the following observations may be of assistance to readers who know the dialects of the South chiefly through the medium of the printed page. Owing to limitations of space, only the more general and characteristic peculiarities of the Carolina dialects can be considered here. A more detailed discussion is now in preparation and will, it is hoped, appear ere long in *Studies in Philology,* published by the University of North Carolina.

As regards consonantal sounds, the spelling adopted in this volume requires little comment. In general the consonants, except *r,* may be understood to have the same value as in standard American English. For practical purposes it may be assumed that *r* is omitted by native Carolinians whenever it stands before other consonants or is final. The result is usually a slight change in the quality or length of the preceding vowel. Thus *floor* and *tore* are practically indistinguishable in pronunciation from *flow* and *toe,* and the Carolina pronunciation of *corn* rhymes with the standard pronunciation of *dawn.* There is also a strong tendency to omit the *r*-sound between vowels (as in *be'yin'* for *burying* [a funeral] and *ve'y* for *very*), and even in some cases when it stands after a consonant and before a vowel (as in *hund'ed* for *hundred* and *p'oduce* for *produce*). In order to avoid undue distortion in the form of the words, *r* is generally retained in the spelling here used except in forms such as *cuss* for *curse, fust* for *first,* and *nuss* for *nurse,* where the meaning is easily identified and the spelling is clearly justified

Digitized by Google

by tradition. The combination *er* is also freely used, especially in final position, to represent the indistinct sound heard in the Carolina pronunciation of such words as *tobacco* but lacking in more exact speech.

As appears from the examination of a large body of dialect literature, the practice of spelling together groups of words pronounced as a unit is frequently open to objection; hence it has been followed here only in a few well established cases such as *gimme* for *give me, mebbe* for *maybe,* and *nemmine* for *never mind.* The highly characteristic Southern pronunciation of *you all* (practically *yawl*) is indicated merely by a hyphen (*you-all*).

Of the many phonetic differences between the dialects of North Carolina and standard American or English usage, several require special attention.

For the short *o* sound heard in the standard English pronunciation of *cob, dog, fog, frog, God, gone, gospel, hog,* and similar words, the typical uncultured North Carolinian generally substitutes a sound closely approximating that of the vowel in *law.* Or, to put it another way, in North Carolina *God* rhymes with *sawed,* and *hog* is pronounced as though it were spelled *hawg.*

The dialects of North Carolina show few traces of the so-called "broad *a*" and none at all of the middle or Continental *a* recommended by the dictionaries for such words as *branch, can't, France,* and *grass.* Except before *r* the sound in such cases is usually that of *a* in *lamb,* sometimes slightly drawled. The same vowel is heard in the Carolina pronunciation of *ant, aunt, bath,*

Digitized by Google

calf, dance, gape, half, and similar words. Thus, in eastern North Carolina, *calm, palm,* and *psalm* rhyme with *dam.* When the *a* sound (written *a* or *ea*) precedes *r,* the *r* practically disappears and the vowel approaches the sound of *aw* in *law* so closely as to be easily distinguishable from the New England pronunciation of *a* in the same position. Thus, in North Carolina *yard,* though not quite a perfect rhyme for *sawed,* is much more nearly so than it is for *hard* as pronounced by the New Englander. (Cf. *Dialect Notes,* I, 34.) As elsewhere in the South Atlantic States, the "broad *a*" is most frequently heard in the eastern Carolina pronunciation of *ask, ma, master, pal* A characteristic though not exclusively Carolina pronunciation is *cain't* (cf. *ain't*) for *can't.* In *calf, can't, car, carpet, Carter, garden, (re)guard(s),* and other words in which the accented *a* is preceded by a *c* or *g(u),* the glide-sound following the consonant and popularly supposed to be an earmark of aristocracy in eastern Virginia and North Carolina, is seldom heard except among negroes and whites of the older generation.

In the North Carolina pronunciation of *apple, ash, bag, candle, cash, have, rabbit, saddle, spasm,* and similar words, the accented vowel is generally somewhat flattened and is occasionally drawled. Important exceptions are *ketch* for *catch, chomp* for *champ, flop* for *flap, stomp* for *stamp, strop* for *strap, tossel* for *tassel,* and *tromp(le)* for *tramp(le).* A similar substitution is frequently heard in the pronunciation of *barrel, barrow, narrow, spargus* (asparagus), and *sparrow.*

Digitized by Google

The short *e* sound heard in the standard pronunciation of *any, bed, bury, dead, friend, heifer, Reynolds, said, says,* and similar words is not uniformly preserved in the dialects of North Carolina. A frequent and characteristic substitute is short *i,* especially as in Anglo-Irish, before *m* or *n.* Thus *end* becomes *ind; Evans, Ivans* or *Ivins; fence, fince; Jenny, Jinny; men, min; pen, pin; yesterday, yistidy.* Short *i* is also the accepted vowel in the Carolina pronunciation of *again, get, kettle, project, ten,* and *yet.* Again, among negroes and uneducated whites the accented vowel of *dead, edge, leg, neck,* and *sedge* is frequently replaced by the sound of *a* in *age. Keg, wrestle, yellow, yes,* and a few other words occasionally have the same accented vowel as *rag,* and in the more remote districts *deaf* rhymes with *leaf.*

Among negroes and certain rustics *bear, declare, fair, stair, pair, swear, their, there,* and similar words frequently have the same accented vowel as *bar* and *star,* but *care, scare,* and *scarce* are pronounced as though spelled *keer, skeer,* and *skeerce.* In the pronunciation of negroes *scarce* rhymes with *face.*

The obscure vowel sound heard in the standard pronunciation of the unaccented syllables of such words as *ago, children, China, cupboard, famous, liquor, mother,* and *nation* is not only preserved in the Carolina pronunciation of these and similar words, but is often substituted where in more precise enunciation other vowels are required. Its extensive occurrence is one of the chief indications of the "laziness" frequently charged against Southern speakers generally. Because

Digitized by Google

of the practical impossibility of representing with ordinary letters the more difficult examples of slurring in the dialects of North Carolina without deforming the words beyond recognition, the standard spelling is preserved except in a few cases where tradition justifies the substitution of *o, a,* or *er.*

For the short *e* sound heard in the standard pronunciation of *certain, learn, search, serve,* and similar words, mountaineers and negroes are likely to substitute the *a* sound of *Clark. Heard* is frequently pronounced *hyeard. Girl* may become *gall;* the pronunciation *gyerl* is confined to a few older whites and negroes.

In *been, breeches, sleek, teat,* and a few other words, the accented vowel of standard pronunciation is uniformly replaced by that of *bit. Creature* is pronounced *creeter* or *critter.*

For the accented short *i* heard in the standard pronunciation of such words as *bring, dinner, hinder, linen, miracle, pith, pin, since, spirit, thin, thing, think,* the uneducated Carolinian is likely to substitute a short *e* sound. That is to say, in the mouth of the typical uncultured speaker the accented vowel of *pith* and *hinder* is that heard in the standard pronunciation of *death* and *tender.* Other noteworthy departures from standard pronunciation are *genuaine* for *genuine, favoraite* for *favorite, highstrikes* for *hysterics, reptaile* for *reptile, eetch* for *itch,* and *mischeevous* for *mischievous.* In North Carolinese the universal pronunciation of *Mrs.* is merely *Miz,* with the final consonant somewhat prolonged. (Cf. Krapp, *The Pronunciation of Stand-*

Digitized by Google

ard English in America, New York, 1919, p. 122.)

For the accented vowel of *boar, bore, door, floor, force, gourd, porch, pork,* and most other words of the same class, the native Carolinian substitutes a long *o*. The *r* is of course lost. Thus, in typical North Carolinese of the remote rural districts *boar, door, floor,* and *sore* are homonymous respectively with *beau, dough, flow,* and *sew.* Noteworthy also are the pronunciations *janders* for *jaundice, sassy* for *saucy,* and *faward* for *forward.*

The *u* sound heard in the standard English pronunciation of *lose* requires special consideration. As in certain sections of America outside North Carolina, *food, proof, roof, root, soon, spoon,* and certain other words have the sound of *oo* heard in *balloon,* whereas *butcher, broom, coop, Cooper, hoof, hoop, Hooper,* and *room* have a short *u* sound like that heard in the standard pronunciation of *bush.* Again, in the Carolina pronunciation of *cute, dew, due, duty, stew, tune,* and *Tuesday,* the accented vowel is preceded by a glide sound as though the words in question were spelled *cyute,* etc.; in *absolute(ly), blue, deuce, glue, Lucy, Luke, rude, Sue, true,* and most other words of this class the glide is never present. In North Carolina, as elsewhere in the South, the "correct" differentiation in this matter is one of the best criteria of native speech. No North Carolinian of uncontaminated linguistic habits would, for example, pronounce "New tunes are due to Sue," *Noo toons are doo to Syue.*

A noteworthy departure from the accented vowel heard in the standard pronunciation of such words as *pull, woman, wood,* are *put, took,* and *soot,* which

Digitized by Google

among older speakers generally rhyme respectively with *gut, tuck,* and *smut.*

For the so-called "long *i*" of standard usage the Carolina lowlander frequently substitutes a sound composed of the *u* of *but* followed by the vowel of *tea.* In a number of words—notably *advice, (al)might(y), bite, cipher, (de)light, disciple, ice, like, mice, nice, night, right(eous), title, trifle,* and *twice*—the latter is the accepted pronunciation along the coast as in other parts of the South Atlantic seaboard, and its "correct" usage is one of the best linguistic earmarks of the native Southerner. In the matter of "long *i*" the Carolina mountaineer is much closer than the lowlander to the ordinary pronunciation in the North and the Middle West.

Analogous to the treatment of "long *i*" is that of the *ou* sound heard in the standard pronunciation of *couch* and *town.* Most words containing this sound are pronounced much as they are outside the South, but in certain cases—notably *doubt, house, louse, mouse, mouth,* and *south*—the first element of the diphthong is replaced by the vowel of *met.* Less frequently the same combination of short *e* and *u* is heard in *cow, cloud, down, flour, flower, found, foul, fowl, how, howl, now, plough,* and *sow* (a female hog). The ability to use this sound "correctly" is another excellent test of Southern speech. Among the mountains the *au* sound appears to be the rule. Except in the most remote districts the diphthong lacks the flat, nasal, drawl adopted by many Northerners who attempt to imitate Southern dialect.

For the *oi* sound heard in the standard pronunciation

Digitized by Google

of such words as *anoint, hoist, join(t), joist, point, poison, spoil,* and *tenderloin,* negroes, mountaineers, and other ultra-conservative speakers substitute "long *i.*"

TOM PEETE CROSS.

The University of Chicago.

Digitized by Google

The following pages contain advertisements
of some

BOOKS ON THE DRAMA

and

PLAYS

A descriptive circular
of all their books in
this field
will be sent on application by

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY
19 W. 44th St. New York

Digitized by Google

PRODUCING IN LITTLE THEATERS

By CLARENCE STRATTON

Written with a contagious enjoyment, it shows how to manage the actors, mount, costume, light, finance, select plays, etc., with over 60 striking illustrations and an annotated list of 200 plays.

The Drama "will be of tremendous service ... supplies to amateur producers the information for which they are writing frantically. . .invaluable."

SEEN ON THE STAGE

By CLAYTON HAMILTON

The fourth of this noted critic's books on the contemporary theatre covering a wide range of plays and authors, including O'Neill, Dunsany, Ervine, Drinkwater, Shaw, Tolstoy, etc., etc.

Brander Mathews in *New York Times:* "His four volumes of collected dramatic criticisms are not unworthy to be set on the shelf by the side of Lemaitre's "Impressions de Theatre" and Faguet's "Propos de Theatre." His preparation for dramatic criticism is exceptionally ample. He adds also the other three qualifications which a critic ought to possess—insight and sympathy and disinterestedness. These plays are vital and vivid in Mr. Hamilton's pages.

TOLD IN A CHINESE GARDEN AND OTHER PLAYS

By CONSTANCE G. WILCOX

For Outdoors or Indoors. They also include *Pan Pipes, Four of a Kind, The Princess in the Fairy Tale* and *Mother Goose Garden.*

Evening Post: " . . . A welcome contribution to the literature of the Little Theatre. Whimsical, imaginative, pictorial. . . . An author of promising originality, taste and style. . . . "

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

19 West 44th Street **New York**

Digitized by Google

CAROLINA FOLK PLAYS

Edited by *Frederick H. Koch*, founder of The Dakota Playmakers and of The Carolina Playmakers.

Five one-act plays by various authors. With illustrations from their productions. $1.75

When Witches Ride—Peggy—Dod Gast Ye Both!—Off Nag's Head or *The Bell Buoy—The Last of the Lowries.*

Plays full of atmosphere and flavor. Outlaws, Moonshiners, "revenoors", witches and land-pirates provide action and picturesqueness. Has Professor Koch started to do for America what The Abbey Players did for Ireland?

Walter Pritchard Eaton in The Drama: "Koch is doing a wonderful work. He is teaching young people to write their own plays, about their own people and their lives, stage them, costume them, act them."

FRANKLIN—*By Constance D'Arcy Mackay, author of The Beau of the Bath, etc. A play in four acts.* $1.75

Shows Franklin from his "Poor Richard" days through his triumph at Versailles.

Boston Herald: "We see Franklin as the wag, the dreamer, the lover, the scientist, the author, the diplomat, the patriot. It is a fascinating play to read."

Chicago News: "True to period. . . . The moments of crisis are well managed, the characters convincing and the humor delightful."

PRODUCING IN LITTLE THEATERS

By Clarence Stratton. With 70 Illustrations. 2nd Printing. $2.90

Literary Review of New York Post: "The most important book for the small stage and one of the most practical additions to theatrical literature."

PLAY PRODUCTION IN AMERICA

By Arthur Edwin Krows. With many illustrations. $3.50 net

Life: "Everything that pertains to plays and their production."

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

19 West 44th Street Viii '22 New York

Digitized by Google

Producing in Little Theaters

by CLARENCE STRATTON

Author of "Public Speaking"

258 pages—70 illustrations—11 chapters

Annotated list of 200 plays for amateurs

$2.90

A model manual, sane and sensible, helpful and practical . . . A word of praise must be given to the many illustrations . . . selected to adorn this book. . . . Immediately helpful.—*Brander Matthews in New York Times.*

The most important book for the small stage and one of the most practical additions to theatrical literature for some time past.—*New York Literary Review.*

The amateur producer is bound to appreciate these pages particularly.—*St. Louis Star.*

It is impossible to over-estimate the value of this book as a practical and stimulating help.—*Hartford Courant.*

A record of interesting experiments in stagecraft with well selected list of 200 plays suitable for amateurs.—*St. Louis Post-Dispatch.*

A varied and unusual collection of facts and data. . . . Sanely and soundly acquainted with things theatrical.—*Philadelphia Ledger.*

For the thousands of teachers who take on dramatics as extra duty, the work is invaluable.—*Drama.*

The book is extremely well done. . . . To its public it will be indispensable.—*Chicago Evening Post.*

The first book which has come forth which treats all the important phases of a little theater.—*Brooklyn Eagle.*

An excellent book. . . . Knows his subject well.—*Boston Herald.*

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

Digitized by Google

BY CONSTANCE D'ARCY MACKAY

THE LITTLE THEATRE IN THE UNITED STATES

An account of our principal little theatres, describing each with its history, policy, achievement, repertory, lighting, scenery, etc. There are also chapters covering The Northampton Municipal Theatre, the New Theatre experiment, the repertory system, and the cost of maintaining a Little Theatre. With over 20 unusual illustrations and a 30-page index. 277 pp. $2.50.

Walter Pritchard Eaton: "Not only of great value to the student, but a great stimulation to the Little Theatre managers, to writers, and to ambitious amateurs everywhere. . . . I shall find occasion to make much use of the book this winter, I am sure, and to recommend it."

COSTUMES AND SCENERY FOR AMATEURS

This book includes chapters on Amateurs and the New Stage Art, Costumes, and Scenery, but consists mainly of simple outline designs for costumes for historical plays, particularly American Pageants, folk, fairy, and romantic plays —also of scenes, including interiors, exteriors, and a scheme for a Greek Theatre, all drawn to scale. Throughout, color schemes, economy, and simplicity are kept in view, and ingenious ways are given to adapt the same costumes or scenes to several different uses. With over 70 illustrations and full index. 258 pp. $1.75.

HOW TO PRODUCE CHILDREN'S PLAYS

After treating of the history of the children's play movement, its sociological aspects, and suggestions for new fields, there come chapters on play-producing scenery, costumes and properties. The book discusses the special needs of public schools, social settlements and camps, and has lists of plays for such places. There is a bibliography of the whole child-drama movement. 151 pp. $1.35.

PATRIOTIC DRAMA IN YOUR TOWN

Miss Mackay sketches the main essentials with which any fair-sized town may have pageants, A Little Theatre, or an Outdoor Theatre. She also gives detailed suggestions for community Fourth of July and Christmas Celebrations, etc. 135 pp. $1.35.

A circular including Miss Mackay's popular plays for young and old, free on application to

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

PUBLISHERS (10'22) NEW YORK

Digitized by Google

By Clayton Hamilton

STUDIES IN STAGECRAFT

Contents: The New Art of Making Plays, The Pictorial Stage, The Drama of Illusion, The Modern Art of Stage Direction, A Plea for a New Type of Play, The Undramatic Drama, The Value of Stage Conventions, The Supernatural Drama, The Irish National Theatre, The Personality of the Playwright, Where to Begin a Play, Continuity of Structure, Rhythm and Tempo, The Plays of Yesteryear, A New Defense of Melodrama, The Art of the Moving-Picture Play, The One-Act Play in America, Organizing an Audience, The Function of Dramatic Criticism, etc., etc. $2.25 net.

Nation: "Information, alertness, coolness, sanity and the command of a forceful and pointed English. . . . A good book, in spite of all deductions."

Prof. Archibald Henderson, in The Drama: "Uniformly excellent in quality. . . . Continuously interesting in presentation . . . uniform for high excellence and elevated standards. . . ."

Athenaeum (London): "His discussions, though incomplete, are sufficiently provocative of thought to be well worth reading."

THE THEORY OF THE THEATRE

The Theory of the Theatre.—What is a Play?—The Psychology of Theatre Audiences.—The Actor and the Dramatist.—Stage Conventions in Modern Times.—The Four Leading Types of Drama: Tragedy and Melodrama; Comedy and Farce.—The Modern Social Drama, etc., etc.

Other Principles of Dramatic Criticism.—The *Public* and the Dramatist.—Dramatic Art and the Theatre Business.—Dramatic Literature and Theatric Journalism.—The Intention of Performance.—The Quality of New Endeavor.—Pleasant and Unpleasant Plays.—Themes in the Theatre.—The Function of Imagination, etc., etc. $2.25 net.

Bookman: "Presents coherently a more substantial body of idea on the subject than perhaps elsewhere accessible."

Boston Transcript: "At every moment of his discussion he has a firm grasp upon every phase of the subject."

PROBLEMS OF THE PLAYWRIGHT

This is probably even more interesting than the author's popular *Theory of the Theatre* or than his *Studies in Stagecraft* and is somewhat longer and more varied than either of its predecessors. It represents the best of his work for several recent years. $2.25 net.

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY
PUBLISHERS NEW YORK

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

609 MAR 27 PD

Digitized by Google